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COULING
ON THE
LABOURING
CLASSES



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OUR
Labouring Classes:

THEIR
INTELLECTUAL, MORAL,
AND
SOCIAL CONDITION

Considered:

WITH
SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT.

BY SAMUEL COULING.

"Whilst deaf to the complaints of the poor, we have beheld ignorance, wretchedness, and barbarity multiply at home without the slightest regard."—ROBERT HALL.

LONDON:
PARTRIDGE AND OAKLEY, PATERNOSTER ROW,
1851.

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TO THE
RIGHT HON. LORD ASHLEY, M.P.

MY LORD,

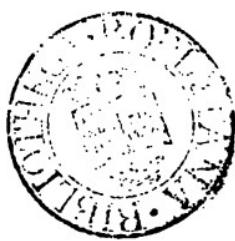
No one has shown a more disinterested and earnest desire to ameliorate the condition of the Labouring Classes, than your Lordship. Your time, your energies, and not a small portion of your wealth, have been devoted to their cause. To your Lordship, therefore, as the "Working Man's Friend," this small work, written with the view of promoting their highest and best interests, is dedicated,

By your Lordship's
Obliged and humble Servant,
THE AUTHOR.

8, NORWICH COURT,
FETTER LANE.

MARCH, 1851.

1972



P R E F A C E.

FOR the publication of the following work, as well as the sentiments it contains, the author is alone responsible. The persuasive partiality of friends cannot be pleaded as a reason why the work is ushered into existence ; nor does the author think such a plea either sufficient or necessary at any time. The work owes its origin to an advertisement which appeared in several newspapers about twelve months ago, offering a prize of fifty pounds for the best essay on the "*Social, Intellectual, and Moral Condition of the Working Classes.*" The author being himself a working man, and having, in one way or another, been identified with the working classes for many years, became a competitor for the prize. Though the prize was awarded to

another essay, yet the writer of the following having seen that the Adjudicators were of opinion that the publication of some of the unsuccessful essays “would be opportune and useful,” he determined to submit his work to the public. This, however, he was unable to do, until he had obtained subscribers enough to defray the necessary expenses. To this is to be attributed the great delay in the publication of the work, which has, however, in the meantime, been entirely re-written, and much new matter inserted.

To those noblemen and gentlemen who have so kindly subscribed to this humble attempt to do good, the author tenders his sincere thanks.

S. C.

March, 1851.

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THE WORKING CLASSES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THAT a working class must exist in distinction from men of wealth, is a truth so obvious to every reflecting mind that I do not now feel it necessary to attempt to prove it. Every one must acknowledge also that a mutual dependency subsists between the employer and the employed. The one cannot do without the other. Hence the importance of the question before us; a question requiring to be discussed in the spirit of our Divine Master, and apart from all political or sectarian feelings. It is not a disgrace to be a working man—on the contrary, a useful, intelligent, and well-conducted working man may always take his stand in society as an honourable man. Even our Lord, when in this world, pre-eminently identified himself with the poor; and instead of taking his place in the Jewish Sanhedrim, he went about doing good,

and “the common people heard him gladly.” And it was from among the ranks of the working classes that his first disciples came, and from among them too, that the first disseminators of his doctrines were chosen. For what was Peter but a working man—a fisherman? And was not Paul a tentmaker? It is greatly to be feared that in this country the working classes have hitherto been but little appreciated—they have been looked upon too much as machines, having no will or purpose of their own, and only capable of, and intended to, obey the will of him who employs them; or to be moved by the master somewhat in the fashion of a mere automaton. In by-gone times they were looked upon and treated as serfs, or slaves, the property of their lordly masters. They possessed no rights—their lives were scarcely their own—under the absolute sway of their feudal lords, they dared not resist the iron-hand of tyranny and oppression; implicit obedience to every command, however harsh, tyrannical, and contrary to the best feelings of humanity, was the lot of the working men of England, until about the close of the fourteenth century. These times have, however, happily passed away—never more to return. The march of improvement and the progress of education, have placed the working man in a somewhat different position. He occupies new ground—his claims to kindred

with his fellow-man are recognized, and there are now not a few honoured names, even among the aristocracy of the land, who devote themselves to the workman's welfare. These are indications of the good time coming. Many are continually lamenting "the good old days" that are past, but the spirit of progress points onwards towards better days. We live now in better times than the past, and better times than these in which we live are yet in store. In the meantime, everything which concerns the spiritual and temporal welfare of the labouring population of our country, claims the best attention of all who profess the name of Christ, and who lay any claim to philanthropy and humanity. The object of this work will, therefore, be to consider the present condition of the working classes, and to shew how that condition may be improved and elevated. And, in doing so, I wish to confine my remarks to his intellectual, moral, and social condition; with his political condition, I wish not now to interfere, further than is absolutely necessary in the present inquiry. His rights as a man, and an Englishman, must ere long claim the full and impartial attention of the legislature; in the meantime, let us see, that by intellectual and moral improvement, he shall be thoroughly qualified to discharge those important duties and privileges which will then be conferred upon him.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORKING MAN'S HOME.

In taking a view of the condition of the working classes, we naturally in the first place look at their *homes*, for if a man be in a prosperous condition, and he have acquired moral and intellectual tastes and habits, his own home is the first place he himself will look to. This is a particular trait in the Englishman's character. What then, I ask, is the general condition of the working man's home? And where shall we seek it?—Not in the spacious and healthy squares of the West End—not in the wide and open streets of first-rate thoroughfare—not in the large and accommodating mansion in the sombre looking, but well ventilated streets, in the vicinity of the parks—not in the delightful and suburban villas, within a few minutes' ride of the metropolis. No! to find the working man's home you must visit the streets, courts, lanes, and alleys, in the more crowded and obscure parts of town—the cellars of Liverpool,—the courts of Manchester,—the wynds of

Glasgow. You must ascend to the garrets, or dive into the kitchens or cellars of old and dilapidated houses, in streets and courts almost unvisited by the genial rays of the midday sun. The home of the working man is the *one* room in a house, crowded with other lodgers, sometimes as many as fourteen families living in one house, seven or eight families in one house being very common. This *one* room is the only accommodation he has for all family and domestic purposes. It is, in many cases, his workshop by day, his sleeping room at night. In this one room, small and ill ventilated, his whole family, frequently consisting of grown up boys and girls, all sleep*—in this room the meals are prepared and eaten, and in this room the family washing, etc., is performed. This picture is no exaggeration. It might have had darker shades thrown in. We need only to visit a few of the habitations of the working classes, to be fully assured of the facts here set forth. We select no particular locality—let the poorer streets and courts of London be visited promiscuously, and facts relating to the homes of the working classes will be elicited that would startle the inquirer. It is true that there are exceptions; many of the working men are sober, prudent men, and in constant employ-

* I have known instances of fourteen persons of different sexes sleeping in one room.

ment—these naturally seek some additional comforts, and their homes are somewhat of a superior character. I speak however of working men in general, and from actual observations made in London, Norwich, and some other large cities and towns, I can say that the working man's home generally possesses little or nothing that can be dignified by the name of comfort. We reach his habitation by groping our way up dark, narrow, and unsafe staircases—the room he occupies, with his wife and children, may be about ten or twelve feet square, and without any conveniences whatever; and even for this scanty accommodation, he must pay from three to four shillings per week. In such a home as this the finer feelings of humanity too often become blunted, and, at last, instead of cherishing the feelings so touchingly expressed in the well known lines, “Home, sweet home!” he shuns his home, and seeks his comforts in a neighbouring tap-room. Well might Mr. Charles Dickens, in one of his popular works, exclaim “Oh! if those who rule the destinies of nations would but remember this,—if they would but think how hard it is for the very poor to have engendered in their hearts that love of home from which all domestic virtues spring, when they live in dense and squalid masses where social decency is lost, or

rather never found,—if they would but turn aside from the wide thoroughfares and great houses, and strive to improve the wretched dwellings in bye ways, where only poverty may walk,—many low roofs would point more truly to the sky, than the loftiest steeple that now rears proudly up from the midst of guilt, and crime, and horrible disease, to mock them by its contrast.”* I might speak of the influence these homes must necessarily have upon health; I prefer however giving the following report of deaths, dated February 3rd, 1849.† Mr. Seagrove states with regard to a narrow court, Devonshire Place, St. Mary, Newington, where four deaths of young children had occurred about the same time in nearly contiguous houses, that it is only eight feet wide, and situated on the bank of an open sewer, which overflows after sudden and heavy rain into these and surrounding houses.” Mr. Holl also mentions a house, where a girl had died of fever, 19, Upper Edmund Street, King’s Cross, near the Gas works. “It contains six rooms, of which one is converted into a dust bin; a drain runs under the house, whence effluvia arises of the most offensive character.” These facts speak for

* Master Humphrey’s Clock, vol. ii, p. 2.

† This work was written early in 1850; recent returns however speak to the same facts.

themselves, and require no comment. "A clean comfortable dwelling," says W. E. Channing, "with wholesome meals, is no small aid to intellectual and moral progress. A man living in a damp cellar, or a garret open to rain and snow, breathing the foul air of a filthy room, and striving without success to appease hunger on scanty or unsavoury food, is in danger of abandoning himself to a desperate selfish recklessness."

CHAPTER III.

EMPLOYMENTS.

THE working classes in London alone, number about 500,000, and may of course be divided into the employed, and the unemployed. I now direct attention to those in employment, and the question arises whether, generally speaking; their employments are conducive to their moral and intellectual welfare? In this part of our subject I am aware that I am treading upon somewhat tender ground. I step, as it were, between the employer and the employed. It is not however for the purpose of setting class against class that I do this, but simply, if possible, to unite the two classes in one interest,—in one mutual, compact, holy brotherhood of feeling and motive,—to ask the employers to abridge the number of hours, and if possible lighten the labours of those who work for them; to say to them, in short, in the language of Holy Writ, “Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal,” and to exhort them, that whatsoever they would that men

should do unto them, even so they would also do unto others. It is not too much to say that the wealth of the middle and upper classes is produced by the working man. True, capital is required in the first instance, but capital without skill and labour would produce no result. It is when labour and capital are combined, or when labour is hired by capital, that it is enabled to produce such amazing results. This will be evident if we look at the iron and coal trade, each employing vast numbers of men, requiring great capitals, and spreading riches over large masses of society. In the iron trade it is said that nearly 800,000 tons are annually produced, requiring the labour of 90,000 men. The coal trade offers, from its numerous mines, 25,000,000 tons of fuel each year, for the service of man. The manufacture of leather alone has been estimated to be worth £10,000,000 to the nation each year. It is also said that 833,000 persons are employed in the cotton trade alone, at an annual expense for mere wages of about £20,000,000.* I do not stay to inquire into these statistics, I merely give them as I find them in a work of acknowledged authority; and I give them simply for the purpose of showing what capital and labour can do

* M'Culloch's Dictionary of Commerce, p. 415.

together, but which neither capital nor labour could effect single handed.

Among the working classes themselves, a great objection exists with regard to machinery; it is not difficult however to find that these objections are gradually passing away, nor is it difficult to prove to them that in consequence of the improvements arising from machinery, the middle and lower classes are better off now than they formerly were. In fact, as Dr. W. C. Taylor observes, "it requires no very deep knowledge of history to discover, that the wardrobe of the wife of a humble tradesman of the present day would have excited the envy of a Saxon queen or even a Plantagenet princess. This abundance of cheap clothing has not only increased the comfort, but it has tended to promote the moral advancement of the people."* Under the operations of the factory system in large cities and towns, there is no doubt a fair amount of comfort for the operatives as long as trade is brisk, and they continue in full employment; but when once the demand for labour slackens, then scarcely any man can be worse off than the factory operative. Their general condition is then one of miserable depression. In Norwich, where I have personally visited

* Factories, and the Factory System, p. 17.

many of the hand loom weavers, their condition is that of continual depression. In 1844 the most skilful and expert weaver could only earn about six shillings per week. In 1846 a higher scale of wages was agreed upon by the masters, but even this but little benefited the operatives, for a woman, who did the best kind of barege work, after working hard from daybreak till eleven o'clock at night, could only earn nine shillings per week, and many men of industry and skill could only earn from eight to ten shillings per week. Many of these men and women have families, which are almost of necessity. utterly neglected.

The agricultural labourers are, if possible, even worse off. In the agricultural districts of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, the wages of the labourer averages about eight shillings per week; I knew several men in a small agricultural village in Norfolk whose wages amounted to seven shillings only. Dorsetshire has been long proverbial for low wages. Able bodied men there being paid from five to seven shillings per week. I might also mention that in a small seaport town in Dorsetshire, I have visited many whole families, where the united earnings of the father and one or two of the boys together has been under nine shillings per week.

Nor are the working classes of London better

paid than their fellows in the country. It is only necessary to visit the habitations of slop tailors, or shoemakers, or shirtmakers, and to hear the heart-rending tale of distress, from those who sit up early and late, and eat the bread of carefulness, and after all find that the toil of the week does not procure them even a sufficient supply of bread alone.

There are, however, thousands of the working classes who are wholly unemployed. The sufferings of many of these, especially in the winter, are truly dreadful. First they dispose of every available article of wearing apparel—then their little furniture—and lastly, their bed. The pawnbroker's exorbitant interest upon the money advanced cannot be paid, and their property is lost, probably never more to be replaced. After enduring unexampled privations, they necessarily become paupers. And it is a fact that in England alone, there are more than 1,250,000 paupers annually relieved out of the poor rate. More than one-seventh of the entire population, therefore, are paupers. This is certainly an alarming state of things, and requires to be well looked into by our rulers. It is true that this condition is too frequently brought on by themselves—by some misconduct or imprudence of their own, and there is undoubtedly a great deal of truth in the language

of Daniel Defoe, the celebrated author of *Robinson Crusoe*, who in 1704 published a pamphlet entitled "Giving Alms no Charity," in which he says, "There is nothing more frequent, than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pocket full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps, drunk, till it is all gone." This, however, is no reason why they should always be suffered to remain poor and destitute; rather should the helping hand of friendship be held out to them, that, if possible, they might be re-established in their former position. It is not to be premised of all, however, who are out of work, that they have thrown themselves out. It is a fact that there are thousands bearing irreproachable characters, who cannot by any possibility of means find employment of any kind.* What the effect of this must be upon their moral and intellectual habits, can be more easily conceived than described. This, however, is a wrong state of things, and should not exist in a country where the land, if properly cultivated, is capable of sustaining from 120,000,000 to 130,000,000 of persons; for Mr. Porter tells us that there are nearly eleven millions of acres in the United Kingdom, capable of cultivation, but which are yet wholly uncultivated by any one.

* It is said that there were 15,000 persons out of employment, *in London alone*, last winter.

CHAPTER IV.

HABITS.

BAD habits are easily formed, but not so easily abandoned. Working men, when mixing with their fellow workmen, frequently form habits opposed to their moral, social, and intellectual improvement. The habit of swearing is in constant use among them, so much so, that in some workshops and manufactories common conversation cannot be carried on without an oath, or profane word. This useless and sinful habit is first acquired by imitating the language of others, and imperceptibly grows upon the learner until he believes it to be absolutely necessary to swear, in order to show his manliness.

Another very injurious habit common to working men, is that of frequenting the ale-house. To this moral pest house they wend their way upon every opportunity afforded them. The workman leaving his home early in the morning, takes his first drop on the road to his work—his dinner and tea time are frequently spent in the tap-room, and at night, when the toils of

the day are over, the tap-room is again the resort of himself and companions. In the tap-room, too, he frequently receives his hard earned wages on the Saturday night, and spends half those wages before he gives his home a thought. This in course of time engenders habitual intemperance, and calls aloud on all masters to abolish a practice so detrimental to the interests of their men, and, indirectly, to the interests of themselves. When intemperance becomes a confirmed habit, then everything is sacrificed to gratify this accursed appetite. The warmth and splendour of the glaring gin palace offers too striking a contrast to the cheerless and ill-furnished dwellings of the poor. Raffles, Derby sweeps, and other temptations are held out, too seductive to be resisted; and the vice of drunkenness soon becomes a confirmed habit. It is impossible to overrate the evil resulting from this source. Upon this subject I shall content myself by transcribing the following extract from the report of the Rev. Mr. Hine, the chaplain of the Westminster House of Correction.

“ When the father or mother is an inveterate drunkard, the sin falls heavily upon the children; they are generally but too apt to follow the parents’ example, and in most cases go on from bad to worse, till the whole family sinks in misery and ruin. Take as an illustration the

following case :—G. S., a youth committed to the Westminster House of Correction for stealing a small remnant of cloth, confessed to the chaplain that his ruin was entirely owing to the intemperate habits of his father, who was a carpenter, able to maintain his wife and family in comfort, had he been a steady man. But, unhappily, he took to drinking, and then everything went wrong. At length his mother fell a victim to his father's brutality; she died from ill-usage, received from him in a fit of intoxication, and he then turned the boy out of doors, and refused him any assistance. From that time the unfortunate lad was compelled to seek a precarious living in the streets, where he soon got acquainted with bad characters, who enticed him into thieving, as his only resource against starvation, and in the end he was committed to prison as above stated—his reputation gone and his future prospects entirely blighted by the misconduct of the very being who ought to have been, and but for his sinful propensity for drink, probably *would* have been, his guide and protector. This is only one of the many similar accounts which might be adduced to show the mass of crime engendered by that detestable vice, *drunkenness*, so fatal to the person himself, and all who come within the sphere of his influence."

The *sabbath* too is totally disregarded by a large proportion of the working classes. Many of them remain in doors the whole day, in a state of listless inactivity and drowsiness: others sally out for their morning's walk unwashed, and on returning towards their homes at the legally appointed hour for the opening of the gin palaces, they enter one of those temples, and perhaps leave it not until half intoxicated, when they reel home and sleep the rest of the day. Another habit very common among the working classes, in the management of their families, is the total *want of economy*. It is not unfrequently the case that a workman in the constant receipt of thirty shillings per week, will not have near such a comfortable home, nor be able to make anything like so respectable an appearance, as a clerk, or a shopman, who, perhaps, has but eighteen, or twenty shillings per week. How is it to be accounted for? Simply from the fact, that neither the workman, nor his wife, have been trained to habits of economy. They spend pence, as though pence did not constitute money—whatever is fancied is obtained, without regard to its necessity, or otherwise. It is not unfrequently the case that the mechanic who received thirty or thirty-five shillings on the Saturday night, has not a shilling left on the Monday following; and then, in

order to satisfy the claims of the week, every article of wearing apparel, etc., is pledged, to be redeemed, at a great interest, on the Saturday night following; and there are many who make this their invariable practice every week, all the year round. "It is a fact," says one, "that the chief consumption of oysters, crabs, lobsters, pickled salmon, etc., when *first in season*, is by the lower classes of the people. The middle classes, and those immediately under them, abstain generally from such indulgences until the prices are moderate."* These habits must necessarily have a demoralizing effect upon the minds of the working classes—in fact, among a very large body of working men, there is an entire abandonment of all moral feeling. This fact is referred to by one writer in the following strong language. "The licentiousness," says he, "which prevails among the dense population of manufacturing towns, is carried to a degree which is appalling to contemplate, which baffles all statistical inquiries, and which can be learned only from the testimony of observers. And in addition to overt acts of vice, there is a coarseness and grossness of feeling, and an habitual indecency which we would fain hope are not the

* Barton's Inquiry into Depreciation of Labour, p. 30.

prevailing characteristics of our country."* Thus I have attempted to glance at the condition of the working classes, in their *homes*, their *employments*, and their *habits*. The facts I have stated are distressing, but it would have been easy for me to have set before the reader worse. I am desirous, however, of not exaggerating; I put down nothing in malice. I state the truth; and ask whether their condition does not require improvement? whether their position must not be elevated?

* Inquiry into the State of the Manufacturing Population, 1831, p. 25.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT THE WORKING CLASSES OUGHT TO BE.

We have seen what the working classes *are*; I now proceed to inquire what they *might be*, could they be made susceptible of any social, moral, and intellectual improvement. It will not be for a moment denied that working men are constituted, mentally and physically, exactly as other men. What other men are, therefore, they might be, if placed under favourable circumstances. A man is not a blockhead, and incapable of improvement, *because* he *is* a working man; nor is another individual a clever or learned man, *because* he *is not* a working man. A working man, like any other man, is endowed by God with a thinking, reasoning mind, capable of improvement. Many of the working men of Great Britain have good, sound, common sense, and practical understanding; and only want some favourable opportunity to develope their faculties, and call forth their energies. We are happily not wanting in examples of what working men can accomplish. We have

the names of Watt, and Arkwright, and Hargreaves constantly before us—nor can the honoured name of Elihu Burritt, the self-taught blacksmith, be ever forgotten. What then might we not expect to see, could the moral, social, and intellectual habits and feelings of the working classes generally be improved?*

They would certainly be a *happy and contented people in themselves*. Contentment does not so much spring from prosperity, as it does from a well regulated and instructed mind. There are many in the height of affluence and yet discontented. But a person trained to well regulated habits, and with a well disciplined mind, will say with Paul, “I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” The complainings and repinings of the working classes are proverbial:—it is not denied, but that they have much cause for complaint, still we say that if their position were elevated, and their minds improved, the voice of complaint

* It may not, perhaps, be uninteresting to intelligent working men, if we record the following facts, as illustrative of the above remark. Dr. Franklin, the American philosopher and statesman, was a printer; Hogarth, the celebrated painter, was an engraver of pewter pots; Dr. Faraday, the eminent philosopher, was a bookbinder; John Howard, the philanthropist, was a grocer; Wordsworth was a barber’s boy; Robert Bloomfield was a shoemaker; Inigo Jones, the great architect, was a carpenter; John Bunyan was a tinker.

would not be so loud—contentment and gratitude would fill their hearts, and happiness would follow. Peace and contentment will always go hand in hand together, and that man who feels thankful to God, and content with the station Providence has assigned him in the world, will be a happy man—far happier than hundreds who roll in wealth, and luxuriously enjoy all that heart can wish.

Would they not also be eminently a *blessing to their country?* Essentially useful and necessary to their country, undoubtedly, they now are. No one in the present day of enlightened philanthropy would speak in depreciating terms of the working men of England, as a body. In a trading and commercial point of view they work wonders, both in the amount of work executed, and the manner in which the work is turned out of hand. In this respect they are already a blessing to the country, but this is not what is here intended. I would take a higher stand than this. I want to see the working man respected by the country at large. I want to see the aristocracy of the land paying due homage to the intelligence, industry, and morality of the working classes. I want to see the working classes themselves taking their stand in their own proper position, among the wise and good men of the country. I want to

see sobriety, intelligence, and religion combined, forming the character of the working classes. And men occupying such a position must be real blessings to the country, both in their individual, and collective capacity; and the advantages thus derived by the community at large would be incalculable. I am not now imagining any utopian state of society; nor a new moral world, in the sense in which it has sometimes been held up to public view. All that I am now endeavouring to show, is, that a hard working, sober, contented, and religious body of working men would essentially benefit the country—by creating a moral feeling throughout the entire population, that would make this country a happy nation—and each man a blessing to himself and the country at large.

And as they would be a happy and contented people in themselves, and a blessing to the country, so they could not fail in being *examples to the world at large*. They would stand out in bold relief as an example of what an intelligent body of working men might be as men—as husbands, and fathers—and as citizens. Their examples of industry, perseverance, and integrity, would be pointed at by the different governments of the world, as illustrations of the strength, prosperity, and happiness of our nation. A higher standard of honourable feeling would

arise between nation and nation, from an improved tone in the character of the people; and thus, in time, might we expect to see national animosities and dissensions cease, and peace, with all its happy results, triumph over all the nations of the earth. A reciprocal feeling of brotherhood between nation and nation, will first arise in the minds of the working classes of the respective countries, and if their minds be but properly cultivated and enlightened, the happiest results must follow in every respect. This state of things must progress with the march of improvement, and the results will benefit the world at large.

CHAPTER VI.

REMEDIAL MEASURES.

THIS is certainly the most important branch of our subject. The country has not been wanting in writers and lecturers on the condition of the working classes, and various remedies for their wrongs, real or imaginary, have been proposed. Some have been wrong in the premises laid down, their conclusions, therefore, have been inevitably false. Others have only partially examined the subject—they have considered merely the political rights of the working classes, and the remedies proposed to redress their wrongs have been disorder, riot, and bloodshed. Another class who have looked into the condition of the working men, morally and socially, have sought to remedy the evils in their condition, by setting up a system of morals, religion, and sociality, in direct opposition to the doctrines of Holy Scriptures. All these systems, it is obvious, must fail; for, if we wish really to better the moral and social condition of the working classes, we must make the reli-

gion of the word of God the basis of all our improvements. Mr. Robert Owen has made many attempts, according to a system of his own, to benefit the working classes. He commenced his system under the most favourable circumstances, on his own property, at New Lanark, on the banks of the romantic Clyde, in Scotland. There is no doubt but that he here effected much good, by teaching the people to become industrious and careful, and by the establishment of infant schools, for it appears that this village, with a population of 2,000 souls, only sent three criminals to justice in thirty years. After this however, he attempted to carry out his plan on a larger scale—purchasing land in different parts, and forming communities for the establishment of what he called “the new moral world.” The signal failure of his plan is well known. Nor could it be otherwise, for any system based upon practical infidelity, and abolishing all religious obligations—annulling marriage, and all social duties—establishing exclusive dealing, and holding all things in common, is only calculated to loosen the reigns of natural corruption, and to stir up the evil passions in man’s heart, until dissensions and discord step in to overthrow all harmony and confidence.

Nor is the system of Mr. Feargus O’Connor,

M.P., any better, as too many working men have already found out to their cost, and disadvantage. His "Labour Bank," and his "National Land Scheme," are both faulty, and only calculated to mislead the unthinking and unwary.

It is not my intention, however, now to propound any new scheme for the amelioration of the working classes. My opinion is, that working men should be taught to think for themselves, and to trust to themselves; this being done, many of the evils under which they labour might be remedied by themselves. What I now propose is briefly to point out a few of the means, which if made use of, I think would tend to improve and elevate the moral, intellectual, and social condition of the people.

And first, I would suggest a more efficient and well organized TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT, a vast and gigantic crusade against the vice of intemperance, to which the labouring classes are especially exposed. It is a lamentable fact that drunkenness is the cause of total ruin to a very large number of working men. Many, from previous habits, or present employments, think it necessary to indulge in the use of spirituous and fermented liquors; and too soon, in very many cases, they become confirmed drunkards, ruin themselves and families, and end their days in the workhouse.

The very large number of gin palaces and ale houses in London, and the principal large towns in the kingdom, together with the magnificent appearance of many of them, makes it evident, that a very large proportion of the wages of the working man (by whom these palaces are principally supported) are spent in these pernicious places.* It is a fact too, that drunkenness tends greatly to increase crime. "The results," says Mr. Bentley, "of all my own personal investigations of the causes of crime, are, that at least *one-half* the crimes against property are caused, directly or remotely, from the use of intoxicating drinks; that more than *three-fourths* of all offences against the person, originate from the same cause; and I have never yet examined a well educated criminal, *whose offences were not demonstrably arising from the same cause.*"† The testimony of Lieut. Tracy, the governor of the Westminster House of Correction,

* It is said that there are 5,017 public houses in London, or one publican for about every 450 persons. In a population of about 1,212,000, comprehending the towns of Manchester, Leeds, Halifax, Huddersfield, Bolton, and nearly all the large towns in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire, and Lancashire,—there were found to be, in 1846, public houses to the number of 14,300. If the average number of the members of a family be estimated at five, then it follows that every *seventeen* families were supporting a public house.

† Bentley's State of Education, Crime, etc., 1842, p. 178.

is to the same effect. He says, "The lamentable and increasing vice of drunkenness, in most instances (for rare, indeed, are the exceptions), may be regarded as the forerunner of every crime, each day's experience showing that drunkards of either sex, in order to gratify this direful passion, will dispose of their last available article of furniture, even to their only bed, and, in very many cases within my own knowledge, of the tattered garments of their helpless and greatly to be pitied children."

The Rev. George Holt, chaplain to the Birmingham Workhouse, speaking from actual experience, says, "Of every hundred persons admitted into the Birmingham workhouse, ninety-nine were reduced to this state of humiliation and dependence, either directly or indirectly, through the prevalent and ruinous drinking usages of our country." Mr. Chadwick, the Poor-Law Commissioner, says, that "the ungovernable inclination for fermented liquors, is one very considerable cause of pauperism." Mr. Bagshaw, chaplain to the Salford gaol, says, "The increase of crime in Manchester, I attribute to the increase of intemperance." Many similar reports might be given. But we want a remedy for this state of things. And the best remedy that suggests itself appears to be the wide and efficient dissemination of temperance

principles, upon the "touch not, taste not" system. The work has been tried, and to a very great extent, found successful. Hundreds of the working classes have by these means become sober men, and reaped the benefits arising from sobriety and industry, in their own happiness and prosperity. What is now required is a renewed campaign. Let a most active and efficient agency be appointed throughout the kingdom. Let the missionaries of temperance, well qualified for their work, visit the homes, workshops, and manufactories of the working classes. Let lectures be appointed in every city and town, and soon will the drinking customs and usages of England (at least among the working classes) be abolished. I give the following statement, made to the Commissioner of the *Morning Chronicle*, to show that teetotalism does not injure the hard working man. "Since I have given over intoxicating drinks, I scarcely know what thirst is. Before I took the pledge I was always dry. I certainly have not felt weaker since I left off malt liquor; I have eaten more and drank less. I have backed as many as sixty tons in a day since I took the pledge, and have done it without any intoxicating drink, with perfect ease to myself, and walked five miles to a temperance meeting afterwards. I've got a family of six children under twelve

years of age. My wife's a teetotaler, and has suckled four children upon the principle of total abstinence. Coal backing from the ship's hold is the hardest work it is possible for a man to do. Going up a ladder sixteen feet high with 238 lbs. weight upon a man's back is enough to kill any one."

CHAPTER VII.

EDUCATION.

EDUCATION must necessarily be regarded by all as a very great means for the elevation of the working classes. There have been some, indeed, who have asked, What good can education do the working classes? To such I refer to the evidence given by the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, who says, "While education is not meant to raise the working classes above their condition, it may greatly multiply the comforts which they enjoy in it. It may preserve them from exchanging light, clean, and cheerful cottages for comfortless cellars; it may give them better clothes, better food, and better health; it may deck their windows with finer flowers; spread cleaner linen on their tables, and adorn their dwellings with more convenient furniture. While it may enable a few, by superior attainments, to fill higher situations with credit to themselves and satisfaction to their employers, it may enable many to turn to account the advantages of their humbler

situations. It may teach them how to gain and how to spend; it may secure to them employment, and save them from waste; it may hinder them from sinking into abject poverty,—or should they, by the force of adverse circumstances, be brought into trouble, it may so multiply their intellectual resources, and nerve them with so firm a courage, as may enable them again to rise above it. By increasing and elevating their domestic affections, it may invest their homes with an undecaying charm; by inspiring them with a thirst for knowledge, it may provide rational and ennobling amusements for their hours of leisure; and by both these additions to their spiritual existence, may rescue some from spending their evenings idly in mere vanity of thought, and others from resorting to the public house for the pleasure of talking obscenity and scandal, if not sedition, amidst the fumes of gin and the roars of drunken associates. Good principles, good sense, and good manners—the fruits of education—may give them the honest satisfaction derived from the respect of all their neighbours. By its aid they may learn to think so soundly, and to weigh evidence with so much acuteness, that the wild doctrines of a licentious infidelity may shock their understandings as well as revolt their hearts. And thus placed

beyond the reach both of superstition and profanity, they may be led to seek and enjoy, through faith in Christ, the favour and blessing of God."* The day is happily now too far advanced for any sympathy to be manifested in the dogma that "Ignorance is bliss." The cry on every side now is, "Educate! educate!" Schools of different kinds are multiplying,—government is voting the public money for educational purposes—and yet, undeniably, the working classes are to a very great extent uneducated. This is evident from the criminal returns, from which it appears that, in 1847, there were taken into custody 62,181 persons;—20,702 females; 41,479 males;—of these 15,698 were under 20 years of age; 3,682 between 10 and 15 years; 362 *under* 10 years. Out of the whole number of 62,181, there were 22,075 *who could neither read nor write*; and 35,227 who could *only read imperfectly*. It has been calculated that there are, at the present day, in England and Wales, nearly 8,000,000 persons who can neither read nor write—that is to say, nearly one quarter of the entire population. At a recent meeting of the working men of Leeds on the subject of non-sectarian education,

*Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1840-1, p. 167-8.

Dr. Smiles drew a strong picture of the lamentable ignorance prevalent among the working classes. "About one half of our poor," he said, "can neither read nor write. The test of signing the name of marriage is a very imperfect absolute test of education, but it is a very good relative one: taking that test, how stands Leeds itself in the Registrar-General's return? Thus, in 1846, of 1,850 marriages, 508 of the men, and 1,020 of the women signed their names with marks; of 47 men employed upon a railway in the neighbourhood, only 14 could sign their names on the receipt of their wages; and lately, of 12 witnesses, 'all of respectable appearance,' examined before the Mayor of Bradford at the court-house there, only one man could sign his name, and that indifferently." "I have seen it stated," said the doctor, "that a woman for some time had to officiate as clerk in a church in Norfolk, there being no adult male in the parish able to read and write. For a population of 17,000,000 we have but twelve normal schools; while in Massachussets they have three such schools for 800,000 of population. Every broken tradesman in this country thinks himself, and is thought by others, good enough to set up for a teacher."

The question may be asked, How is this to be

accounted for, since sabbath schools are every where to be found, and thousands of children have received the advantages of these schools since first founded by Robert Raikes in 1781? To this it can only be replied, that although thousands avail themselves of these opportunities, yet, there are thousands who *do not*. In proof of which, I need only refer to the following extract from a special Report of the Committee of the East London Auxiliary Sunday School Union, in which they state, that in the Tower Hamlets there are 108,304 children between the ages of five and fifteen. Of this number there are—

“ Scholars in Sunday schools connected with this auxiliay	21,439
Scholars estimated in schools not reported	2,000
“ “ Church of England schools	12,000
“ “ Charity schools	3,000
“ “ Ragged schools	1,500
“ “ Roman Catholic schools	2,000
Belonging to those classes in society unlikely to be brought into Sunday schools	12,000
	53,939
Leaving the large number of	54,365
children who do not attend any sabbath school. After making due allowance for errors of all kinds, it may be fairly stated, that there are 40,000 children unprovided with sabbath school	

instruction. It therefore appears that, for every child in the sabbath school there is *one out*. Vast numbers of these neglected children constitute the crowds that may be met with in the parks and fields on the Lord's Day ; and prowling in the dark alleys of the low neighbourhoods, or concealed in the recesses of the railway arches, pass their time in gambling and profanation. In these unfavourable situations they grow up, becoming keen in the pursuit of wrong, and active in the commission of crime." A similar result is, also shown by the Report of the West London Union, in which the number of children between the ages of five and fifteen is stated to be 110,545, out of which the large number of 47,644 do not attend Sunday schools, but who should be there. Lord Brougham upon one occasion exclaimed, that "**IGNORANCE PREVAILED TO A HORRIBLE EXTENT,**" which statement is certainly as true now as when his Lordship made it in 1833. Nor can there be any question but that ignorance produces crime, a very large amount of which is clearly attributable to the improper education of the poor ; and the inquiry naturally arises,—To whom is this neglect attributable ? Immediately, no doubt, the blame lies with the parents ; but, ignorant themselves, they are not likely to appreciate the advantages of a good education, or if they did,

they have not the means of bestowing it on their children. The ultimate and more serious blame rests with those who have taken upon them the duty of instruction. Whatever money therefore is judiciously and properly spent in education will be saved to the country by lessening the expenses of punishment.

What then is required to better this state of things? I reply, first, an extension of the Sunday and ragged school systems. With regard to the former, I would recommend that each school should endeavour to obtain for itself persons of decided piety as teachers—I would further advise that all teachers should regularly prepare themselves during the week for their sabbath work,—and let them be at all times marked for the punctuality of their attendance. Further, it is advisable that a system of domiciliary visitation should be kept up to the parents of the children attending the school—thus the regularity of the children's attendance would be ensured, and the parents themselves benefited. A Sunday school library is also an important advantage in promoting the moral and social improvement of the poor. Ragged schools have contributed much towards the improvement of the class for which they were designed. For the efficiency of the ragged school system the country is indebted to the exertions of Lord

Ashley, who is ever foremost in every good work, having for its object the welfare of the poor. Since the formation of these schools, some thousands of children of the lowest class in society have received the benefits of education, who had previously never been to any school whatever, and who, but for this system, would have grown up in total ignorance of all moral and social virtues, and become a pest to society. These schools affect the working classes, not immediately, but remotely; it is a fact that these schools are frequented by children who could not gain access to any other school—many of them being in the most ragged and filthy condition, and obtaining their living by begging or stealing—wandering about the streets all day in idleness and rags, and sleeping at night beneath dry arches, under doorways, in empty carts, or wherever else they can. It is estimated that there are 15,000 youths regularly undergoing a systematic training for thieving; and that there are 25,000 who nightly sleep in the casual wards of workhouses, or in the open air. Now, it is obvious that if these lads are taken by the hand, if they can be taught to read and write, if they can be instructed in the duties of social life, and, especially, if religious principles can be instilled into their, hitherto, vacant minds,—I say, if these things can be

done, then it is obvious, that not only will the individual himself be benefited through life, but society at large must be benefited also. The Rev. Mr. Davies, the Ordinary of Newgate, in a recent Report, states that a considerable diminution in juvenile crimes had taken place, in which diminution he considered that ragged schools had been chiefly instrumental.

In connection with this subject also I would urge the necessity of an increase in the number of *day schools*, properly conducted, and adapted in price to the condition of the working man. For these schools the masters should be well qualified. Many of the day schools at present in existence have, no doubt, been taken up for a living by persons of little, or no education themselves, and who have had nothing else to which they could turn their hands. One of the masters told me, in answer to the question "Whether he had been educated for the employment?" that he was so educated; adding, "*My father larnt eight parts of speech, besides English; and parson Founds toud him tin he coud teych him, no feer!*" Upon my remarking that I supposed he would have been liberally educated, he said, "*Oh, yes! I larnt accident and grammar.*" Necessity, not fitness, seems in almost every instance to have been the cause of the teacher's adopting this employment, as it is

evident, by a perusal of the answers which they had given on being asked what inducement led them to undertake the profession of school-masters : “ Old age ! and to get a living !—I were left with four young children, and I undertook it to get a living !—I took it because I could get nothing else ! ” One man gave as his reason, “ That he had lost his left arm ! ” and a woman, “ That she had lamed her foot ! ”—Another old woman said, “ She kept a dame school, because she geet poor and was a widow ! ”*

The consequence of this is, that the children entrusted to the care of these masters are often unable to read or write, after months of attendance at these schools. These masters may be just capable of teaching A. B. C., and spelling in the old fashioned and tedious way adopted in our own infancy, but beyond this they cannot soar ; and if the children do not learn, the account is laid to the dullness of the child, and not to the ignorance of the master.

Mr. Withers, who has been recently lecturing on the Spelling Reform, in an address which he has issued to the operatives of Stockport, makes the following remarks—“ Why is it that the working man is still practically uneducated ? Because of the impossibility of acquiring the

*Ashworth's Report on the State of Education in Bolton, 1838.—Review in the *Athenæum*.

means of education—reading and writing—in the very limited period which he can command during his youth for school attendance. Her Majesty's School Inspectors report, that but a fractional proportion of the children who attend our public schools acquire a knowledge of reading and writing so as to use them to a good purpose; while one-half of the children leave the schools, not being able to read or write at all! Mr. Baptist Noel stated, at a recent public meeting, that he had been informed, that upon a large examination of children brought up in National Schools, not one in six could afterwards read. There is but one way of rendering the education of the masses a possibility—simply the means of education." In fact, I believe that education has not yet been placed upon a philosophical, or practically useful basis. It is felt to be imperfectly attained even by the educated, utterly withheld from the multitude, and not yet systematised, either in plan or principle. And I fully agree with the Rev. S. Green of Taunton, who says that "The question proves too clearly that the science of education in Great Britain is yet in its infancy. A true and comprehensive view of the intent of early instruction would have prevented it altogether. Rightly considered, school education is not the preparation for the business of

manhood, but for manhood itself. Its end is not so much the acquisition of knowledge as the formation of right habits, the strengthening of intellect, the cultivation of taste. Now, these attainments are desirable for every rank of life; that of the ploughman or the senator, the working carpenter or the working clergyman. The poorest man as well as the richest will be fitted for the duties of life, whatever they may be, in proportion to the strength of his intellect, the refinement of his taste, the purity of his morals. For the poor, therefore, as well as for the rich, is that early training to be claimed which will best contribute to ensure these results. A clear and wide distinction must be taken between *education*, in the sense in which the word is here used, and *apprenticeship*. The latter is the instruction of the artificer, the former the training of the man. Apprenticeship is the preparation for the specific pursuit of after-life, and therefore properly succeeds education, which is the moral preparation for life itself. The manifold varieties of business will cause the one to be infinitely varied, from the statesman's apprenticeship at college to the artizan's at the shop-board. But, on the other hand, as the greatness and the dignity of manhood are ever the same, the early education of all men should be of the same order."* When, how-

* Green's Prize Essay on Working Classes, p. 52.

ever, I speak of educating the working classes, I do not mean simply that they should just be taught to read and write, ~~and~~ nothing more. This is well as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. What I mean by education is *giving knowledge of the best kind in the shortest and most effective manner*. I want the mind to be so trained as to receive and comprehend the instruction given, and the will so to be regulated as to carry into constant practice the truths taught. Thus the better feelings of our natures would be brought under the influence of those moral and intellectual powers which God has implanted in the soul.

But it will be asked, How is this knowledge to be communicated to *each* individual in the best manner? I answer that, to accomplish this, it is absolutely necessary that the teachers themselves should be trained to their work. A long apprenticeship is considered necessary to the successful prosecution of most trades, and there appears to be no reason why a somewhat similar probationary period of instruction should not be required of those whose future work is to form the minds of the juvenile portion of the community. No one would think of entrusting his case in the hands of a lawyer or physician who had not been duly qualified; why then should the formation of mind and character be entrusted

to one, of whose qualifications nothing is known ? Let there be, therefore, one, or more, Normal Schools, or training establishments for teachers, in every large town or city in the kingdom. Let these institutions be entirely free from sectarianism, and only supported by voluntary contributions. Let the teachers be well trained in the most approved modes of education, and then sent forth with a diploma, duly accredited. Those teachers, thus qualified, would be enabled, on the simultaneous plan of teaching, to communicate the knowledge not of words only, but of things also, in an easy and pleasant manner, to from fifty to one hundred and fifty children at once, by which means the knowledge communicated would retain a much stronger hold upon the mind than it does under the slow method of single teaching.

As closely allied to the above subject, I would also recommend the establishment of an *increased number of Literary and Scientific, or Mechanic's Institutions*. The last part of our subject related principally to the children of the working classes—the present part of our subject concerns more immediately the working men themselves. I do not here stop to recommend Mechanic's Institutions—the workings of these are too well known, and have been highly beneficial ; they therefore recommend them-

selves. I merely now recommend that these, or similar institutions, should be increased in number, and made more adapted than they are at present to the working man; more suitable to his general wants; more suitable to his pocket. Let Working-men's Libraries, and People's Colleges multiply, and there is reason to hope that in time the imperfections of education will disappear, and a fair knowledge of general history, geography, biography, literature, and elementary science will become the portion of the working classes. I would say, let every city and town have its Institution, with its library and lecture room; and let every workshop and manufactory also have its select library for the use of the workmen there employed. And here masters themselves might do much good by superintending and encouraging these movements, and by selecting the most useful books for the men. I will give an instance as I find it just recorded in the public prints. The Mayor of Manchester has established a *Fund for a Public Library and Reading Room for the Working Classes* of that town. Sixteen, eighteen, or more firms have subscribed each £100 towards the same object, and altogether the sums promised will be little less than £3000. The Hall of Science, a few years ago built for the Socialists, has been

purchased for the library. If this plan were generally followed, it would be the means of forming a bond of union between master and men, not to be easily broken. The advantages of such a course would be mutual; the employer would get better men, and the men would have more respect for the master, and thus mutual confidence in each other would necessarily arise.

Still further too, in connection with this subject, I would recommend the formation of useful *libraries in the coffee rooms* of London, and other large towns. Very many of these coffee shops are frequented by working men during their meal times, and in the evening after their work is done. This is cheaper and better than the public house. So far well—but it might be better; for if this was properly managed it might be made a very useful instrument in elevating the working classes. But how stands the case at present? It is a fact that in very many of those coffee shops in London, adapted to the use of working men, there are, (not on the week nights only, but also on the Lord's day evenings) lectures and discussions carried on by infidel and chartist lecturers;—the questions proposed being such as, “If there is a God, why does he not do away with moral evil?”—“Is it consistent with the goodness of God to punish sinners in a future

world?"—"Would men be more moral if less religious?"—"Has christianity a greater tendency to moralize than it has to demoralize the people?" &c. Thus the evil passions of the heart are inflamed—doubts on eternal realities are engendered, and the result is, that the frequenters of the room become confirmed deists and reckless politicians. How would this be reversed, if useful and instructive lectures on some of the arts and sciences were delivered instead of such as above mentioned; and if instead of the light, thrashy periodicals to be found in the rooms, there was a well-selected and useful library of reference and general knowledge for the use of the frequenters of the place! This subject would well repay the consideration of some benevolent and christian philanthropist.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGIOUS MEANS.

IN order to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the working classes, a *greater regard to their interest must be shown in the public worship of God*. The population of London, within a radius of eight miles of St. Paul's Cathedral, exceeds *two millions and a quarter*. For these there is not accommodation provided, in *all places of worship of every denomination*, for more than about 800,000, while the average attendance at all places is never above 600,000. Are the working classes present? I fear not. The system of exclusion is carried even into the house of God. The working classes feel that the church or the chapel is not for them. If they attempt to enter a church they are overawed by the grandeur and elegance around them, or they are met by a pompous beadle in gold lace, whose frowning and suspicious look seems to say, "What do you want here?" He next turns to a dissenting chapel; and here, probably, there are *no free seats* for

him, and unless he happens to be very well dressed he will have to stand during the service. He looks around at the fashionably dressed congregation, occupying their richly cushioned pews; he looks at the minister, who is addressing himself to his auditors in language which only the more educated part can understand; and the working man at once feels that the place is not for him. Do I exaggerate? What then is meant by the expressions so frequently made use of in dissenting churches, of "leading men"—"influential men"—"ruling deacons"—"liberal supporters"—"men able to sustain the cause"—"men who will advance the interest," &c.? Are not these evidences of a forgetfulness of working men,—are they not in fact evidences of a mammon worship, disgraceful in a church of Christ; and partaking very much of the spirit censured by the Apostle James? "If there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man, in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say to him, sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

There are many working men, it is true, who

are members of some of our churches—but how stands the case with them? Are they not too frequently made to feel that they are but poor men? The pastor visits the more wealthy of the members, but he crosses not the threshold of the poor man's door. Weight and importance are attached to every suggestion of a rich member, but it is almost a piece of presumption for a working man to express his opinions at a church-meeting. Churches, both established and dissenting, have become either aristocratic or middle class societies. The poor man is to a very great extent unprovided for, and uncared for. How many working men are prevented from attending regularly a place of worship, from an inability to pay seat-rents, and to contribute to the various calls almost incessantly made upon the members. This is an evil which must be done away. The feeling of the working man is, if he cannot pay he has no right to go. And that this feeling is correct is evident from the language of one who is himself a minister, and must therefore know something on the subject. The Rev. Samuel Green says, "The poor man who attends a place of worship without subscribing is treated as only half welcome, and thrust away into the free seats. He may be an unbeliever, a reprobate—no matter; if he is to sit in a pew we must have his money; if

he will not pay, he may stay there on a form without a back, in the draught of the door, or any where." To remedy this, the working classes must be taught that places of worship are built as well for the poor as for the rich. In the house of God all distinctions of rank must be merged in the feeling that the one living and true God is our Father, and all we are brethren. Ministers must give working men a due portion of their attention; and deacons must not be too rigorous in exacting contributions from men of limited and precarious income. Every right-minded and truly christian working man will gladly contribute to the cause of God as far as his means will enable him,—but where the ability ceases, there the duty ceases also. The conscience must be left to dictate whether there is the ability or not. The author would hail that as a happy day to the christian church generally, which saw the total abolition of pew rents, and which left the entire support of the cause of God to the free and spontaneous contributions of those whose hearts the Lord has opened, and to whom he has given the means of contributing. The apostolic injunction, if acted upon, would be found to work well. "Upon the *first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, *as God hath prospered him.*"

The greater proportion of the working classes, however, think not of these things, and never enter into a place of worship at all. "Here," says the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, "within a walk of this place, (St. John's, Bedford Row) we know that hundreds of thousands are living altogether without religion; we know that many are sunk in vice and sorrow; more guilty than the heathen, because they have greater means of knowledge, and they have the prospect, therefore, of a more awful end. Untaught and unreclaimed, they disgrace the kingdom; they daily multiply around us; and while the number of religious persons in this city has been increasing, never was there, I think, so large a mass of *utterly unregarded* heathenism as at this moment."* What means are we to adopt, therefore, to bring these under religious instruction? I answer that, as they will not come out to receive religious instruction, we must take religious instruction even to their homes.

The system of *domiciliary visitation* to the dwellings of the working classes, if extensively and systematically carried out, is the very best plan that can be adopted. This is no new plan either, it has been adopted for some years with

* Noel's Spiritual Claims of London, p. 8.

considerable success by the London City Mission, and some other kindred institutions. What is therefore now required is, that the number of city and town missionaries should be increased, until the entire area of London and every other city and town in the kingdom is brought thoroughly under their operations. To carry out this work systematically, every city and town should be mapped out into districts containing about five hundred families in each. In each of these districts a missionary should be placed, whose daily work should be to visit in succession every accessible house, until he has seen the whole of the families contained in his district; and then to begin and go through again in the same manner. Thus every family would receive the benefit periodically of sound religious instruction, and have an opportunity of hearing the Scriptures read, and engaging in prayer. The beneficial results arising from such a course, both to the souls and bodies of the poor, must be obvious to all, but will never be fully known till the last day.

And in connection with this, I would earnestly recommend the extensive *adoption of meetings for prayer and preaching* in the houses of the poor, upon certain evenings in the week, and on the afternoons and evenings of the Lord's day. Many a working man, and many

a working man's wife, is unable to attend a place of public worship, even if they desired to do so, for want of suitable clothing; and many a man or woman, who has no inclination to go to a place of public worship, would yet not object to enter a neighbour's room to join in singing and prayer, and to hear the word of God. Here then we have a congregation from among the working classes, to whom the gospel is preached "without money and without price," in all simplicity and earnestness. Here is a meeting adapted to the wants of the poor; and a meeting calculated directly, under the blessing of God, to affect the hearts, and to elevate the condition, both morally, socially, and intellectually, of the working classes.

CHAPTER IX.

AMUSEMENTS FOR WORKING MEN.

WHAT amusements are provided for the large body of working men in general? This is a more important question than it at first appears to be.

It is idle to suppose that working men require no amusement—that no amusements should be specially provided for them—or, failing such provision, that they should, generally, be very choice in the selection of their amusements. Men engaged in laborious occupations all the day, struggling to obtain a mere livelihood, and not, perhaps, having domestic comforts at home, are sure to seek out some way in which they can pass away a few hours of the evening in forgetfulness of their anxieties and labour. “It is folly,” says one, who had much experience among the working classes, “to fancy that the mind, spent with the irksomeness of compelled labour, and depressed, perhaps, with the struggle to live by that labour after all, will not, when the work

is over, seek out some place where at least it can forget its troubles or fatigues in the temporary pleasure begotten by some mental or physical stimulant. It is because we exact too much of the poor—because we, as it were, strive to make true knowledge and beauty as forbidding as possible to the uneducated and unrefined, that they fly to their penny gaffs, their twopenny-hops, their beer-shops, and their gambling grounds for pleasures which we deny them, and which we, in our arrogance, believe it is possible for them to do without.”*

Excitement and amusement appear to be indispensable, at least, to the uneducated portion of the working classes; hence we may account for the nightly crowding of such theatres as the Victoria and the Surrey, where the tastes of the working portion of the community are more particularly attended to—and hence, too, the great number of penny gaffs, which are now to be found in most of the populous parts of London inhabited by working men. To do away with the demoralizing influence of these places, some system of wholesome amusement, of an elevating character, must be provided in their stead, and at such prices and such times as to be suitable to the class for which they are designed.

* London Labour, and the London Poor, p. 42.

The experiment was tried at Liverpool, successfully, of furnishing concerts of an elevating and enlivening nature at the same price as the concerts of the lowest grade. Could not penny and twopenny concerts of some of our best music be provided for the working men of London? The experiment is worth making. Can not panoramic and other scenic representations be provided at a price suitable, and the working men invited to attend? Could we not introduce lectures on literary, scientific, and other useful subjects for working men, at a charge of one penny for admission? These experiments are all worth trying; and if tried with spirit, I have no doubt would be effective; and would, in time, entirely supersede the low and grovelling amusements now followed.

All attempts to better the condition of working men in general, must begin by seeking to elevate their character, and not by degrading them. But if we leave them to follow their own inclinations with regard to their amusements, those inclinations, too often corrupt and uneducated, will lead them to choose those amusements which, for the time, afford the greatest amount of liveliness and apparent cheerfulness, without regard to its healthiness or morality. Hence, as we have seen, the theatres are crowded,—the penny gaff, where

dancing in the most disgusting attitudes, and singing the most obscene songs, are constantly taking place, and are considered by the nightly frequenters as "*all the go*;" the saloons, the low concerts, the "free and easys," the prize-fight, or the drunken revel constitute nearly the whole of the amusements attainable by a great proportion of the working classes.

Should this remain the case? I have already hinted at a remedy. Christian men and philanthropists can act upon the suggestions thrown out. Let cheap and wholesome amusements be provided, in every way adapted to the poor, the hard working, the struggling man,—of an enlivening and at the same time an ennobling nature. Cheap they must be, to suit the working man's pocket; and at proper times, to suit his leisure.

To say that working men will not avail themselves of amusements thus provided for them is only to libel the working man's character, and to contradict facts, as evidenced by the numbers of working men who visit such places as the British Museum, the National Gallery, &c., at holiday times; and the United Service Museum whenever that Institution is open free. Could not these and similar institutions be opened occasionally in the evening for the convenience of working men?

Under the head of amusements, also, I would advocate the opening of more parks for the people. In some localities in London, the inhabitants are entirely shut out from the sight of vegetation. Trees do not bud and blossom, grass and flowers do not grow for them. The birds of the air do not sing for them. No pleasant walks invite their attention, and tempt them to turn aside from the public house. To remedy this, let parks be opened in suitable places, within walking distances in each district in London. And thus, not only the amusements, but also the health and comfort of the people would be promoted.

The Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations, now shortly to be opened in Hyde Park, affords us proof that working men are cared for, and their interests thought of by the highest personages in the country. This Exhibition must do much towards promoting the social and intellectual welfare of the working classes. The opportunity afforded them of visiting the Exhibition from all parts of the country will not only be to them an amusement in itself of the highest character, but also calls upon us to provide other sources of wholesome amusement for the people during the time the Exhibition will continue.

For the purposes of amusement, as well as for

mental improvement, time should be given by the employers. It is too much to expect men constantly to work from early in the morning until late at night without having any time for themselves—it is unjust. The body not only requires rest, but the mind also requires relaxation. The early closing system is, however, progressing, and doing much good; and it is for the public rather than the employers to say, whether work men and shop men shall be allowed time for recreation and improvement or not. Let the reader who advocates late hours attend to the two following testimonies :—

The Rev. George Fisk, of Christ Chapel, Maida Hill, says that "Until the late hour system be utterly abolished, there must be a progressive demoralization!"

Mr. Grainger, of the Board of Health, says, "Protracted labour is only another word for sickness, suffering, and death!"

If there is any truth in these statements, the sooner the late hour system is abolished the better.

CHAPTER X.

WAGES AND COMPETITION.

In other portions of this work I have shown the low rate of wages generally paid to working men, particularly agricultural labourers. Many additional facts might be adduced were it necessary; it is, however, acknowledged on every hand that the scale of wages is too low, and that, generally speaking, the working man's wages are insufficient to enable him to maintain himself and family in comfort, not to say respectability.

One who paid great attention to this subject, thus writes—"If field-labourers had constant employment at the present rate of wages, they would not be in a condition to clothe themselves and their families. But numbers of them are frequently out of work for weeks together, and some even for months, in the winter season. Others, who have large families to provide for, are employed during a part of the winter half-year by the parish, at the stone-pits, or on the highways, at six or seven shillings a week

wages. Single women are in the habit of going round to the farmers in search of work. When any of them are fortunate enough to meet with a master for a few days, they receive sixpence a day in winter, but neither food nor drink. Both married and single females are paid at the rate of *eight pence a day in mowing and harvest time*; lads of from thirteen to sixteen years of age receive from two shillings to two shillings and sixpence *a week* without food. But neither lads nor females are in demand during six months out of the twelve. So that the bulk of the peasantry are only half fed in summer, and left to starve in the winter.”*

What, it may be asked, is the cause of this? It was stated by a gentleman, but a few days ago, that the question of wages did not depend upon the merit of the workmen, but upon the supply of the workmen; in fact, that it rested entirely with the employer whether he chose to give his workmen six shillings or sixteen shillings per week! But if it be a truth that the labourer is always worthy of his hire, then surely this is a wrong state of things: and those employers who take undue advantage over the workman, and force him, by the fear of starvation, to accept of insufficient remuneration, do

**Impending Dangers of our Country*, by Rev. W. Ferguson, -
p. 29.

not act in accordance with the principles of justice. Labour has a value, and should be paid for accordingly, and he who seeks to purchase labour at less than its fair value, is as guilty of dishonesty as that man who, by disparaging representations, obtains possession of *some article* of value at much less than its real worth.

There can be no efficient remedy, however, for this state of things until truth and justice are the governing principles of the employer. Physical force will never raise the wages of working men. Working men can only be benefited by truth and conviction. - The process may be slow, but *force* can never hasten it.

Competition has done much to ruin trade, the remedy for this must be sought for in the associative progress now making. Without, however, entering further into this subject, I will comprise all I have to say more in an extract from a work recently published,* and which, without binding myself to every sentiment contained in this extract, will generally express my opinion,—“The broad and determined tendency to association, is an earnest that it will eventually reach the field where it is more particularly required; that it will confront competition and annihilate it. Competition has

* Social Aspects, by J. S. Smith.

been the one idea for long enough now. It has done mighty things in breaking up all bonds of loyalty between man and master; it has annihilated the kind and friendly relationship that once existed between master and servant; it has strengthened and nurtured all the wolfish selfish qualities of our nature, and dwarfed its more generous gifts and impulses, and it is quite time that it should perish. How a new state of labour laws would get organized, or in what precise fashion, nothing but time and laborious experience will demonstrate. Neither Fourierism, nor Cabotism, nor Proudhonism, nor Socialism, nor Communism, nor Louis Blancism, is what is precisely wanted. I do not advocate these; but I do advocate that the inhuman principle of competition, which says to the master, you shall huxter and chaffer, and bid down human souls and bodies in the same manner, and with the same spirit, as you would stones and bricks; and to the work-people, you shall join in one huge, insane, inhuman scramble for work and wages; intent on self; careless and callous as to who starves, so that it be not you,—I do advocate, I say, that this should be done away with, and that a principle of help and good feeling, loyalty between man and man, between servant and master, which association in some measure expresses, be introduced."

I conclude this part of my subject by giving the evidence of a competent witness, before the committee of the House of Commons. Speaking of Associations, he says, "If the experiment succeed, then it is clear that a very great benefit would be conferred upon the working classes; they would derive for themselves all the profit which they can get from their work without any person coming in as an intermediate person between them and the purchaser; which undoubtedly, if they can do, I think they ought in justice to be allowed to do. If, on the other hand, they cannot manage without the existence of these intermediate persons, they will in time find that out."

CHAPTER XI.

MASTERS AND WORKMEN.

MUCH more depends upon the reciprocal exertions of masters and workmen than may be at first apparent.

There can be no doubt but that the general tendency of the human mind is to look to self interest. This law of our nature may be of such advantage as to be beneficial both to ourselves, and to those by whom we are surrounded; or it may be so abused as to become a curse to all.

The selfishness of our natures must be curbed before we can rightly fulfil the divine injunction of Scripture, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." How much of this spirit, which we are informed was the spirit which animated Christ, is there, generally speaking, existing in the minds of masters and workmen towards each other?

The experience of every day answers—But little!

Never, however, shall we see masters what they ought to be to their workmen, or workmen what they ought to be to their masters, until all feelings of selfish animosity are entirely thrown aside and each party takes his place, and maintains that place, which he occupies in the great human family—by love. I say love in opposition to selfishness, as it is calculated to melt the heart to every generous principle and feeling, while the latter will only chill the soul and harden it to every emotion of a benevolent tendency.

But what are the lessons which every day teaches us? Let us look around. Nor have we far to look before we see such sights as might well put all our best feelings to shame, and cause us to blush at the relationship sustained by us, as members of society, to such beings in the form of men.

Injustice, inhumanity, tyranny, exaction, and pride are only a few items in the catalogue of wrongs endured by many workmen at the hands of their masters. Are there not many masters who are of such an overbearing disposition that starvation is but one degree worse than being employed by them? Are there not some so exacting in their demands, that after

having strained every nerve to please them they *will* yet be dissatisfied? And are not many so proud and haughty in their demeanour, that they are as entirely unapproachable by their workpeople as though a great natural gulph had been placed between them? Is it an unusual thing to see emerge from some of the great city emporiums, at the same moment, the master who stately steps into the carriage which is in waiting for him at the door, and his workman, hungry-looking and half clad. The one drives to his fashionable home to ruminate over the pounds, shillings, and pence that day entered in his ledger, while the other, directing his steps to another locality, seeks his half-famished wife and children to divide with them the scanty meal he has just earned.

If these things are true, can we altogether wonder at the dissatisfaction expressed sometimes by working men? Is it to be wondered at that men so treated should not always behave as they ought?

Sufficient has already been said in various parts of this work to show the reader that I am no advocate of the doctrine of communism. To have all things in common, or to abolish gradations in society, or to annihilate the relationship between master and servant, was never intended by God, and would not be for the good of man.

It is quite evident to every reasoning mind that there must necessarily be some men possessed of considerable property and others possessed of none. There must be masters and there must be servants—employers and employed. And should there be any who endeavour in any way to overturn this state of things, however sincere they may be in their endeavours, I do not hesitate to say that they are misguided, and their efforts are entirely misdirected.

Still, however, it is certain that some improvement is here desirable; such an improvement as shall elevate and improve the workman, morally, socially, and intellectually, while the interest of the employer is still unimpaired.

At the commencement of this chapter I observed that there were reciprocal duties belonging to master and workman. Now it is by the performance of these duties on both sides, that this improvement can be effected.

There is no doubt but that a sort of partnership exists between the employer and the employed. Nor does the fact that this partnership is not generally acknowledged invalidate the idea. Partnership consists in two or more persons bringing into a certain business some portion of their property, for which they are to receive a certain share out of the profits. Now, this is just the case with master and workman. The

master puts into his business capital, the workman puts into the business labour, which is worth so much, according to agreement, and which value he is to receive in the shape of wages.

Let this principle be but acknowledged, that there is a partnership existing—that the master depends upon the workman for his labour as much as the workman depends upon the master for his capital—and we shall at once see the importance of mutual help in raising the workman to an elevated position as a moral and intellectual being. For if the workman is taught to look upon his relationship to his master in this light, will he not feel it to be his duty, by every means in his power, to seek his master's interests—because, in a great measure, those interests will be his own also.

But the master, adopting this view of the case, will do much towards advancing the moral, social, and intellectual improvement of working men. He will raise his workman in the scale of society. He will elevate him into an interested, sociable being. By this means the workman will not fail to see that confidence is reposed in him, that his exertions meet with approbation, and he will not only become a better man when he finds that his labour is valued at a fair market value, but he will

become a better workman also. Thus as the duties are reciprocal, so are the benefits likewise. Better masters will make better workmen. The proverb, "Like master like man," is not only old, but also true. Let masters but set the example in endeavouring to improve the condition of their work-people, and they will find the workmen ready to follow in their steps.

There may be some, however, sceptical enough to doubt the utility of improving the condition of the working classes. There have been some who have been fond of making the observation that working people, and the poor generally, are not to be trusted; and that they may always be bought over for any purpose. If men are base-minded and depraved, they will, no doubt, do base actions, whether they be rich or poor.

- If poor, indeed, the temptations to unworthy actions are stronger, and therefore, perhaps, might be more excused. Experience, however, has instructed us that wrong actions are not confined to the poor; but even if they were, this would be more of an argument in favour, than otherwise, of elevating the social, moral, and intellectual improvement of the working classes.

The testimony of Dr. Forbes on this point is extremely valuable. He says, "In the course of my life I have had the pleasure of being acquainted with many individuals of the working-

classes who had, by self-education, attained not merely a large amount of knowledge, but a high degree of mental cultivation and refinement. All these men are, to my knowledge, good and contented workmen, and regard their own position in relation to that of those above them in the philosophical manner I have pointed out. They all cherish the knowledge and the love of knowledge which has become part of their mental being, as the grand treasure of life—as a talisman which, by opening up an endless source of happiness to themselves, and disclosing the real sources of happiness in others, has equalised to their view all differences and distinctions among men of a merely worldly character. These men are all extremely temperate in their habits; and they are unanimous in the opinion, that the dreadful intemperance of the lower classes—at once the curse and disgrace of this country—is mainly owing to their ignorance. The beer-shop and gin-shop are frequented because they supply, in their degrading sociality, the materials for mental occupation which their frequenters have not within themselves, and too often cannot find in their own family at home.”

The Bible, however, is the only true standard of our duty towards each other. The Bible claims to be the Word of God. This is not the place to discuss its divinity. I take now its

inspiration for granted. If then the Bible is the Word of God it becomes us, both masters and servants, well to examine its contents, and to follow out its precepts. And we shall find that not only does it set before us our duty towards God himself, but it also clearly defines our duty as masters towards our servants and as servants towards our masters. And as the following out of these duties in relation to each other, as we have previously seen, has much to do with our subject, I now collect a few of those passages relating to the reciprocal duties of masters and servants; and which I shall give without "note or comment," leaving the reader to ponder well the words of sacred truth for himself.

And first, *as to the duties of masters towards their servants.* "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."* "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven: neither is there respect of persons with him."† "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him; the *wages* of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning."‡ "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers

* Col. iv. 1. † Eph. vi. 9. ‡ Levit. xix. 13.

that are in thy land within thy gates. *At his day thou shalt give him his hire*, neither shall the sun go down upon it ; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it : lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.”* “Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour ; but shalt fear thy God.”†

But now with relation to *the duties of servants towards their employers*. “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God, and his doctrine be not blasphemed.”‡ “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.”§ “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.”** “Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things ; not answering again ; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity ; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”††

Let both master and servant—employer and employed—act upon the duties thus enjoined upon them, and an entire and beneficial change to each may be speedily expected.

* Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. † Levit. xxv. 43. ‡ I Tim. vi. 1.
§ I Pet. ii. 18. ** Eph. vi. 5. †† Titus ii. 9.

CHAPTER XII.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

THIS chapter is headed thus in order to enable me to throw together a few remarks on various subjects, each important in itself, but which I did not wish to form into distinct chapters.

1st. I remark that it is necessary that a *higher standard of moral and religious feeling should pervade the press*. The newspaper press occupies a most important place in society—it is all powerful for good or evil. The formation of public opinion is the work of the press. It is said that more than a hundred millions of newspapers are circulated in Great Britain every year; and during the year ending February, 1849, no less than thirty-five new journals were started into existence. In 1847 it was stated that there were *thirteen* professedly religious newspapers published in London (eleven orthodox Protestant, one Roman Catholic, and one Unitarian,) which consumed between them 2,490,250 stamps per annum, while at the same time there was *one* leading Sunday newspaper,

which for itself, consumed 3,275,000 stamps.* The character of a people may, in general, be pretty well ascertained from the class of newspapers they read. Now if these observations are true, then it becomes a serious inquiry, What class of reading is prepared for, and encouraged by, the working classes? A large proportion of the newspapers read by working men are published on the Sunday. More than 11,700,000 copies of Sunday papers are circulated annually, and are thus made the means of a fearful desecration of that holy day. Many of the papers are avowedly infidel, while others, without avowing as much, make a fearful mockery of everything of a religious nature. In many papers, workmen are set against their masters, and every attempt is made to level property, and to confound all distinctions in society. There are other papers, before the titles of which the word "*infamous*" would be an appropriate adjective, as they contain nothing but rude slander, and scurrilous personalities. These are the works prepared for, and eagerly read by, the working classes; and it must be obvious to every well regulated mind that they cannot be read without seriously deteriorating the minds that imbibe their principles. To elevate

* Oakey's Power of the Press : Is it Rightly Employed?

the condition of the working classes, that portion of the press which they read must be of an elevating character. Newspapers and periodicals of a healthy moral tone must be prepared for them, at such a price as to adapt them to the means of the working man. The Messrs. W. and R. Chambers have done much, in this respect, by their various useful publications, particularly their "Miscellaneous Tracts." "Eliza Cook's Journal," "Dickens' Household Words," "The Public Good," "The Working Man's Friend," &c., might also be favourably mentioned as suitable to the wants of the working man. There is still room, however, for something more—a good and cheap newspaper; and cheap penny tracts and periodicals, containing principles calculated to improve the mind, and cause the working man to think aright on all matters affecting his moral and social interests, should be continually published, and extensively circulated; and these in time would effectually counteract the pernicious tendency of such works as "The Merry Wives of London," "The Love Child," "The Parricide," "The Red Republican," "Paul the Poacher," "Turpin's Ride to York," "Life of Jack Sheppard," "Mysteries of London," and many others of the same class, now in course of publication.

2nd. A few further remarks may be made

upon the subject of the *working man's home*. I have in another part of this work entered somewhat largely upon this subject, and from what has been there said, it must be evident, that if we would hope to see any great moral and social improvement among the working classes, their *homes must be improved*. The amount of moral evil arising from the discomforts of the working man's home is past calculation,—the want of convenience, the smallness, and various other causes all have a tendency to drive the man from his home, and to destroy the health of the family. The Rev. Mr. Hine, Chaplain of the Westminster House of Correction, speaking on this subject, says—“ It is greatly to be regretted that, while splendid mansions are in constant progress in every part of the metropolis and its suburbs, so little provision has been made in this respect for the humbler classes, and especially for the lowest of all, the very class which is most on the increase, and consequently most in need of enlarged accommodation. Within the last few years, hundreds of houses where the poor found a shelter (though indeed a very wretched one) have been pulled down to make room for others of a superior description, but altogether beyond their humble means. The inevitable consequence is, that the poor are now huddled together in

miserable places, wholly unfit for human habitation—dark, filthy, close, and ill-ventilated."

Something has been done in this way of late, under the patronage of Lord Ashley and others, by the erecting of lodging houses for the working classes—in which they can have a suite of rooms, well ventilated, with baths and wash-houses attached, and other conveniences, for a very small amount of rent. The "Model Buildings" in Bagnigge Wells Road, the "Metropolitan Buildings" in St. Pancras Road, the Lodging-house in George Street, St. Giles, &c. may be mentioned as examples. These, or similar buildings must be multiplied, both in London and provincial towns, until the pestilential nuisance of St. Giles, Whitechapel, Westminster, Bethnal Green, &c., are entirely done away with.* For the country, let cottages containing four rooms, two above and two below, with suitable back premises, &c., be built on all farms, for the accommodation of

* Why should not Model Lodging-houses become more numerous? They are excellent institutions, and are in general prized by the poor: and have been found to be paying concerns to those who speculate in them. I would say then, let there be in such places as Westminster, St. Giles, Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, Bermondsey, &c., two or three whole streets completely built upon by lodging houses for the poor. These houses would have a good appearance, make a respectable street, and in time wholly supersede the present filthy and unhealthy streets and houses inhabited by the poor.

the labourers. Each cottage should have a small portion of land attached to it, for the use of the family. The rent should be very low. In country towns and cities, lodging houses should be built, similar to those in London, for the accommodation of workmen and others on the tramp.

3rd. The great thing, however, for working men to do towards advancing their moral, social, and intellectual improvement, is to **HELP THEMSELVES**. They can do much towards ameliorating their condition, by relying on their own resources. By the exercise of a little careful frugality, prudent forethought, and ingenious contrivance, they may raise themselves in the scale of society, and render themselves and families comfortable, and comparatively independent.

The following judicious remarks appeared in a recent number of a very popular journal, and certainly contain a great deal of truth in them. "Our own opinion," says the writer, "is that the working classes very much under-estimate themselves, and do not assume that social position which they are really entitled to occupy. They are wanting in that proper ambition which every man ought decently to cherish. They themselves seem, by their attitude, to encourage the notion that there is something degrading in

labour ; than which nothing can be more false. Labour of all kinds is most honourable and dignifying ; it is the idler who is, above all others, undignified and socially useless. It is because the working man does not aspire, does not value himself properly, that his position remains so equivocal, and relatively inferior ; measured by the rate of remuneration paid to workmen, they are equal to most of the classes which we peculiarly regard as respectable. Nearly all our skilled mechanics and artisans are better paid than the average of our working curates. The working engineer is better paid than the ensign in a marching regiment ; and the foreman in any of our large manufacturing establishments is generally better paid than the army surgeon. A London mason receives 30s a week, while an assistant navy-surgeon receives only 14s., and after three years' service 21s., with rations. The majority of dissenting ministers are worse paid than the higher class of our skilled artisans and mechanics ; and the average of clerks employed in warehouses and counting-houses receive wages considerably inferior to theirs. It is our opinion that working men might, and ought to occupy a social position equal to that of any of the classes we have named, were they so disposed. What is it that prevents their rise in most cases ? It is, we fear, the want of due

mental cultivation—the neglect of their intellectual powers—the want of early education.”*

There is no doubt but that these observations are true, for masters frequently declare that their men, at 25s. a week, do not, as a class, maintain their families, or educate their children, so well as those who have little more than half the sum. If this is the case, then it follows that very much remains to be done by working men themselves towards their own advancement in society. I shall just hint at one or two of the recourses open to them.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES are known to all. Many of these are held in public houses, and are thus objectionable. It is estimated that at the present time, there are 14,000 enrolled benefit societies, and 33,223 non-enrolled societies in the United Kingdom. Of 3,860 of these it was ascertained that not fewer than 1,396 were held in public houses. There are many, however, that are not open to this objection. Let the best of these be sought out, and every man in employment become connected with one. Every assurance and benefit society has printed tables of the benefits resulting to the members; and upon an examination of these it will be found, that for sums varying from two to four shillings per month, a man may obtain various

* Eliza Cook's Journal, June 22nd, 1850.

benefits, as 10s or 12s per week during sickness; or a certain sum per annum for life, after a certain age, according to the rules. Perhaps, however, I cannot here do better than copy a small hand bill recently circulated by the "British Empire Mutual Assurance Company:"—

"A PENNY A DAY.—WHAT CAN I DO WITH IT?

"1st. Are you about THIRTY years of age? Are you a married man? Have you some little ones dependent on your exertions? Or, if not, have you a brother, a sister, a nephew, or a niece, to whom you would like to leave SIXTY POUNDS? The society will insure that sum when you die, whenever that may happen, upon payment of *a Penny a day!*

"2nd. Perhaps you have but one child, and that in his first year; you may secure to him FOORTY-SEVEN POUNDS, to be paid at twenty-one years of age, to begin business, or to begin house-keeping, for *a Penny a day!*

"3rd. You are labouring, it may be, in a profession which requires strength of body, or vigour of mind, which it will not be pleasant to exert so fully after sixty years of age. You may have £121. 15s. from the Society on the day you complete your sixtieth year, to make the remainder of your life comfortable, or an annuity of £12. 10s. for life, beginning at that age, and all this for *a Penny a day!*

"4th. Are you desirous of saving a little money? You may have TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS in twelve years and a half, with your money returnable with interest, if you want it before that time, by paying half-a-crown per month; or you may have TWELVE POUNDS, TEN SHILLINGS in seven years and a quarter, for the same payment; and that is but *a Penny a day!*"

I may, perhaps, here be reminded of the difficulty of accumulating the pence. I, however, more particularly address myself to those who, being in full employment, ought to be able to make such arrangements as to meet this case. Those who are frequently out of employment, and whose means are precarious, will find a difficulty in being at all times ready with their half-crown, unless they exercise great self-denial and prudence, and to them, where practicable, I would recommend—

THE PENNY SAVINGS' BANK. Penny Banks have not yet become universal; there is no doubt, however, but that ultimately they will be found in every parish. The first Penny Bank was formed by Mr. James Scott, at Greenock, in the winter of 1845. Mr. Scott afterwards went to Hull, where he established a Penny Bank, upon improved principles; and so great has been its success, that from the day of its opening, August 1st, 1849, to the 22nd June, 1850, a period of less

than twelve months, there have been received in pence no less a sum than £1,744. 12s., from 6,469 depositors!

In the winter of 1849 Mr. Scott came to London; and, by the advice of the Rev. W. Weldon Champneys, and the assistance of the Rev. Hugh Allen, Messrs. Venables and Hill, together with that of several resident gentlemen, a Penny Bank was established in Commercial Street, Whitechapel. Like the clubs of Greenock and Hull, this institution is nearly self-supporting; and so great has been the favour with which it has been received by the poor, that from its opening on the 30th of January to the 4th of July, 37,884 deposits have been made by 6,141 persons, amounting altogether to £1,369.; and the founder confidently anticipates, that before the bank shall have been established a year, 10,000 depositors will have enrolled their names in the books.

The bank is under the superintendence of three trustees, twelve directors, a treasurer, manager, secretary, and auditor; and the money received will be invested in Government securities, whenever the sums accumulated at the London and Westminster Bank—whose managers allow an increased interest on the deposits, on account of the objects contemplated—are of sufficient importance to warrant their purchase.

The bank is open every evening from five to seven o'clock (Sunday excepted) for the deposit of any sum of money, not less than one penny, nor more than five shillings at one time, the whole being repayable at the end of every year, with interest, or on demand at any time, without interest.

"From the above," writes the journalist, who reports the transactions, "it will be seen that the Penny Banks provide an excellent, safe, and easy means of economy to a class hitherto altogether without the operations of existing institutions. They enable the very poorest—and there are none too poor to save sometimes, if they have the inclination—to lay by something for little luxuries and necessities, which is taking a very low standard indeed. They induce habits of prudence and self-respect, and thus tend to ultimate good and the correction of evil habits. Instances are not wanting in which the improvident have been so far reclaimed as, at the withdrawal of their deposits from the Penny Bank, to have immediately carried them to a savings' bank, and thus to have laid the foundation of what may ultimately prove both a moral good and an actual estate : for ten pounds to a poor man is oftentimes an estate indeed, enabling him to hold himself above the mean and petty shifts to which the improvident are so often

'subjected, and causing him to hold himself, his family, his home, and his country in proper respect. Ten pounds enable an industrious man to emigrate ; and possessing that sum, the striving artizan may marry without fear, and face temptation and pleasure without a sigh. We have no fear that savings' banks—and least of all, penny ones—will ever make misers of their admirers ; and even if they *did* occasionally, there would come less harm to the community from the hoarding of a few pounds than its wasteful expenditure, or the carelessness that comes over the minds of men who have *nothing to lose*. A change of thought and habit is immediately induced when a man begins to save, and it is certain that very few drunkards or idlers among the artizan class have 'money in the bank.' The effort to save makes women economical, and teaches children the right use and value of money ; it induces a love of home, and no man or woman possessing and properly appreciating a quiet and beloved home, can be thoroughly debased : the two principles, love of home and immorality, are opposed to each other altogether.'

By these means then, a steady, persevering, and industrious workman has it in his own power, to a great extent, to help himself. Mr. W. J. Fox has stated that there were 2,302,439

signatures to Chartist petitions last year ; now if each of these petitioners had subscribed one penny, they would have subscribed the means of qualifying 506 electors. I do not intend to enter upon this subject. I merely state the fact, for the purpose of showing the *power of pence*. Let them then be taken care of, and properly husbanded, and the working men of Great Britain may raise for themselves such a moral and intellectual power that nothing can resist. It is a great fact, that the cheap production of every thing which labouring men can consume and enjoy beneficially for themselves, lies at the root of every effective scheme intended for their benefit ; yet, if they have not the moral power, or habit of economizing their pence, and putting them out to the best advantage, cheapness will avail them but little. I might have brought forward examples to illustrate the position I have taken up in this chapter, but I forbear. All working men are not blind to their own interests, and those who are not, will at least weigh well the suggestions I have thrown out before they reject them.

I am aware, indeed, that a very great objection generally exists in the minds of working men, against investing their money in savings' banks. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed last sessions to investigate this

subject. Their report has been recently published, and the committee in their report state truly enough, that "The importance of removing obstructions to the secure investment of their savings, to the middle and working classes, can scarcely be overstated; because this is a consideration upon which the industry, enterprise, and forethought of the classes in question greatly depend." The public have been wont to suppose that, by the establishment of savings' banks, ample provision has been made for encouraging habits of providence among the poorer classes; but it appears that, beneficial as these institutions have undoubtedly proved, their advantages have been confined to a few. It is stated that the greater proportion of the money thus invested is the property, not of working men, but of small tradesmen and masters, and gentlemen's servants. This is explained partly by a prevailing feeling of the insecurity of savings' banks, partly by prejudice, and partly, it would seem, by the existence of a more discreditable cause.

"There is a fact," says a witness, "which I must mention, though it afforded me great pain when I heard it, that there is amongst a certain number of the working classes an actual indisposition to invest in the savings' banks. They say that the effect of it is only to transfer their hard-won earnings to the pockets of the large

fundholders ; I have heard that from two parties not connected with each other. They do not like to be compelled to invest in the funds."

"I think," says Mr. Millbank, a working watchmaker, "that one reason why he (the working-man) does not invest his money in the savings' banks is, that the fact of his being able to save money is used as a pretence why his wages should be reduced ; and he carefully excludes from the knowledge of his employers the fact that he is able to save..... I have found in Clerkenwell, that the workmen of that district who are investors (they are very few in number), go to a distance to find a savings' bank ; and I imagine that people from a distance come to Clerkenwell. Their names are called out loudly and officially, and it has become whispered about that so-and-so is a saving man, and may therefore work for less wages. If large sums of money are accumulated in savings' banks by the middling tradesmen and servants, it is assumed that they are the investments of working men ; and when working men complain of too low a rate of remuneration, these returns are quoted against them."*

To these objections, however, the Penny Savings' Banks are not liable ; they are for the

* Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Savings of the Middle and Working Classes. No. 508. 1850.

reception of the pence of working men, and of working men only ; and a very little alteration in the system of management in the other banks in existence would easily have obviated the objection alluded to.

Let not, however, this sentiment deter working men from making an effort to save. The objection, I think, is not, generally speaking, well-founded ; in a few instances it may be true, but let honour and justice be the rule between masters and workmen, and soon all attempts at, or necessity for, concealment will be done away.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING now brought the subject to a close, I shall address a few remarks—

1st. *To Christian Ministers.* To you much is given, and from you much is required:—especially is it required that a steward should be found faithful to the trust reposed in him. See, therefore, that you overlook not the poor, from an undue regard to the rich. Let the working man recognise in you a brother and a friend. Let him be taught to look upon a minister, not as one above him, but as a faithful friend and counsellor, easily accessible, and ready to communicate at all times such information as he may possess, calculated to benefit the poor. So shall he be approved by his Master at the last day, “Well done! good and faithful servant, for as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me.”

2nd. *To Christian Masters.* Gentlemen! You can do much, very much, towards improving the moral, social, and intellectual condition of

your work people. You can easily ascertain their wants, and, to a certain extent, it is in your power to provide the remedy. We speak not now in regard to wages, that is a question upon which we do not enter. We now refer merely to ameliorating their moral, social, and intellectual condition ; and we say, that, in this respect, Christian masters may do much—by endeavouring to promote harmony, sobriety, and good management among their men—by shortening their hours of labour—by paying their wages early and regularly—by forming libraries, schools, &c. among their men. By these means, while the masters benefit the men, they will also attach the men to themselves, and thus considerable advantage must arise to both parties.

3rd. *To Christian Workmen.* Friends ! We address you with feelings of pleasure. You have proved, by happy experience, that Jesus Christ is the friend and saviour of the working man ; you have by grace been led to see the danger attending a life of sinfulness ; you have been brought to seek a Saviour, and now possess a good hope, through grace, of immortal glory. You owe a debt of gratitude and love to that Saviour who has done so much for you ; and your love to him can be manifested by your endeavouring to do good to your fellow men.

You might, with profit to yourself, contrast your present condition with the condition of many of your fellow workmen, who are yet living in sin, and pursuing a round of ignorance and folly. Is it advisable that their minds should be cultivated, and that their moral and social habits should be reformed ? If so, then forget not the example of your divine Master, who went about doing good, and left you this example that you should follow in his steps. Do you ask what you can do ? Remember that example is before precept, and although you may not be able to instruct them by word of mouth, you can, by your conduct before them, teach them lessons which they cannot fail to receive. Your integrity, your industry, your sobriety, the general tenor of your deportment, the propriety of your behaviour, and the thorough transparency of your whole character, must all tend to convince them of the advantages you possess over them, by your improved and elevated tone of feeling ; and must ultimately lead them to adopt the same course which you have adopted. Thus your example will be beneficial to all around you, and soon the great moral waste now existing will blossom as the rose and flourish gloriously.

A P P E N D I X.

PERHAPS it is necessary to make a few additional observations, and to state a few facts, as illustrative and corroborative of the previous portions of this work. Many of the statements previously made were given, either upon the testimony of well known and accredited authorities, or from my own actual observation. But as it was not desirable to introduce too many notes in confirmation, at the bottom of the pages, they were reserved for an appendix.

FIRST.

Some startling remarks have been made in several places in reference to the WORKING MAN'S HOME. These remarks, however, were not made without a variety of proof being close at hand. The construction of houses in Liverpool for the working classes, for example, is, for the most part, as injurious to the health and comfort of their inmates, as it is possible to conceive. There are in Liverpool about two thousand four hundred courts, many of them constructed in such a manner as to render ven-

expected, these secluded and detached abodes of the wretched outcasts of society are the seats of fever, as well as the haunts of crime and obscenity in their worst forms.”*

“ At the end of Wellington-row, and at right angles with it, ” says Dr. Southwood Smith, “ a ditch, from eight to ten feet broad, extends nearly to the Hackney-road. In the greater part of its course, gardens, neatly cultivated, extend from adjacent houses to its edge; the stench arising from this ditch, at some seasons, is intolerable. The poor people inhabiting the neighbouring houses, while cultivating their little gardens with so much care, as a recreation, and in the hope of promoting their health, little think that at every moment they are inhaling a deadly poison. Yet so it is; the gardens go down close to this ditch, which is always sending up poisonous effluvia, giving them fevers. It is a most melancholy sight.”†

Perhaps, however, no statement can be given to equal the following, which I copy from the Bow Street Police Report, in the Morning Advertiser, of October 24th, 1850. “ He (the witness) was walking along Church Lane (St. Giles) when he found the defendant shovelling the

* “Defective Arrangements in Large Towns,” by Humphrey Sandwith, M.D., 1843, p. 7.

† Health of Towns Report, p. 7.

contents of a common privy into the road, the stench caused by which was intolerable. The state of the houses in this locality was such as no civilized person could imagine. In one small house there were as many as ninety residents, of both sexes, no fewer than thirty being crammed into one room, about fourteen feet square, where shavings were thrown in for their accommodation."

Will my reader bear with me while I give one more statement in reference to Glasgow, in the graphic language of Mr. Symons. "The wynds in Glasgow," he observes, "comprise a fluctuating population of fifteen thousand to thirty thousand persons. This quarter consists of a labyrinth of lanes, out of which numberless entrances lead into small courts, each with a dunghill reeking in the centre. Revolting as was the outward appearance of these places, I was little prepared for the filth and destitution within. In some of these lodging-rooms (visited at night) we found a whole lair of human beings littered on the floor, sometimes fifteen and twenty, some clothed and some naked; men, women, and children huddled promiscuously together. Their bed consisted of musty straw, intermixed with rags. There was generally little or no furniture in these places; the sole article of comfort was a fire. Thieving and

prostitution constitute the main sources of the revenue of this population. No pains seem to be taken to purge this Augean pandemonium, this nucleus of crime, filth, and pestilence, in the centre of the second city of the empire. A very extensive inspection of the lowest districts of other places, both here and on the Continent, never presented any thing half so bad, either in intensity of pestilence, physical and moral, or in extent proportioned to the population.”*

These, then, are a few of the statements which could be brought forward, all tending to substantiate the assertion I made in Chapter II., that the working man’s home was destitute of everthing which might be dignified by the name of comfort; and strengthening the appeal I have already made for great improvements in the dwellings of the industrious classes.

SECOND.

With regard to the EMPLOYMENTS of the labouring classes, much might be said in proof of the statements I made in the third chapter. The scanty remuneration received by the generality of skilled workmen in London and other cities and towns has been so well stated

* Symon’s *Arts and Artizans at Home and Abroad*, pp. 116—120.

by Mr. Mayhew, in his recent Letters on Labour and the Poor, in the "Morning Chronicle," that I need not again revert to the subject. I will, however, just give one example of wages received by agricultural labourers, and which will sustain the statement made in another part of this work, in reference to the agricultural labourers of Norfolk, Suffolk, Dorsetshire, &c. "S. J. is an honest and hard-working man. His wages are 9s. a week, and he has a constant place; he has a wife and six children to support, the eldest of whom is eleven years of age. The poor man is not able to rent a chain of potatoe land; he pays rent for his cottage, rent 1s. 3d. per week."* Thus leaving 7s. 9d. per week for eight persons to subsist upon. What proportion of this sum, I would ask, could be devoted to wholesome and substantial food? Certainly but a very small proportion indeed.

Vast numbers of persons, for want of regular employment, take to selling in the streets for a living; and the sufferings of this class are awfully great. Three consecutive wet days will bring more than half the number of persons seeking a living in the streets, to the verge of starvation. And yet the number of street sellers is continually upon the increase, from the diffi-

* "The Impending Dangers of our Country." By the Rev. W. Ferguson, 1848, p. 81.

culty with which any kind of employment is now obtained. It has been calculated that there are above 34,000 costermongers in London. "But, great as is this number," says Mr. Henry Mayhew, "still the costermongers are only a portion of the street-folk. Besides these, there are many other large classes obtaining their livelihood in the streets. The street musicians, for instance, are said to number 1,000, and the old clothes men the same. There are supposed to be at the least 500 sellers of water-cresses; 200 coffee-stalls; 300 cats'-meat men; 250 ballad singers; 200 play-bill sellers; from 800 to 1,000 bone grubbers and mud larks; 1,000 crossing-sweepers; another thousand chimney-sweeps, and the same number of turncocks and lamp-lighters; all of whom, together with the street-performers and showmen, tinkers, chair, umbrella, and clock menders, sellers of bonnet-boxes, toys, stationery, songs, last dying-speeches, tubs, pails, mats, crockery, blacking, lucifers, corn-salves, clothes-pegs, brooms, sweet-meats, razors, dog-collars, dogs, birds, coals, sand; scavengers, dustmen, and others, make up, it may be fairly assumed, full thirty thousand adults, so that reckoning men, women, and children, we may truly say that there are upwards of fifty thousand individuals, or about a fortieth part of the entire population of

the metropolis, getting their living in the streets.”*

Notice might be taken of the amount of labour incident to various employments—as for instance, the bakers, who are compelled to be up and at work nearly the whole of the night, and also a great portion of the day. Such is also the case with the shopman, the tailor, the needlewoman, &c. The number of operative tailors at this time is not less than 21,000, besides great numbers of women employed in waistcoat and trousers making. This large number of persons, in order to obtain anything like a living, must work early and late.

There is one class of persons generally but little thought of, I allude to the drivers and conductors of our public vehicles. It has been ascertained that there are 11,000 individuals connected with the omnibus labour of London. Of these, 6,000 are drivers and conductors, who work sixteen hours a day—from eight in the morning till twelve at night, without intermission, as they generally receive their meals while sitting on their coach box. Nor does Sunday afford any rest for them, as the same amount of labour is required on that as on other days.

THIRD.

I have said that PHYSICAL FORCE can never

*London Labour and the London Poor, p. 6.

raise the value of labour, and obtain for the workman higher wages. The experiment has been made, and failed. "The strike of the Glasgow cotton spinners, which took place in the summer of 1837, lasted from the 8th of April till the 1st of August, being a period of seventeen weeks and five days. The following is the statement of the loss to the operatives alone, independent of the loss of the masters, merchants, tradesmen, shopkeepers, and others :

700 spinners struck work; their average wages were 32s. per week; they had sometimes been higher; this makes	£19,040 0 0
2,100 piecers, and 2,100 card and picking- room hands, employed at the factories under the spinners, were, in consequence of that strike, thrown out of employment; their average wage was 8s. per week	28,560 0 0
Loss to the operatives themselves by wages	£47,600 0 0

From a speech made by Mr. Alison, sheriff of Lanarkshire, at a late trial of a cotton-spinner for violent intimidation, it appears that this amount of loss is by far the least part of the injury sustained. Speaking of the strike, he says, ' Its ruinous consequences upon the industry and prosperity of the manufacturing classes are already frightfully apparent. The return of the commitments for the county of Lanark exhibits a melancholy increase of crime during the last year, and which will forcibly attract

the attention of the legislature. At the Christmas jail delivery last year, only seven prisoners remained in custody for trial in Glasgow. By the schedule I hold in my hand, there are at this moment sixty-eight, almost all committed during the last two months ! Nor is this result surprising. During the disastrous strikes of the last summer, twenty or thirty thousand young persons of both sexes were thrown idle for many months, in Glasgow and its immediate neighbourhood, almost all accustomed to high wages, and too often to habitual intemperance. Nine-and-twenty thousand persons in Glasgow are, directly or indirectly, employed in the manufacture of cotton goods, the great majority of whom were thrown idle by the spinners' strike ; and this calamitous event took place at a period of unexampled distress, from the general commercial embarrassments of the country, and hardly any means of absorbing the helpless multitudes in other trades existed. For the skilled workmen who arranged their strikes, the cotton spinners, iron-moulders, colliers, or sawyers, funds were provided from the resources of the associations to which they severally belonged ; but for the unhappy persons whom they employed in their labour, the piecers, pickers, drawers, &c., no provision whatever existed, and they were thrown, in vast and appalling numbers, far

beyond the reach either of public or private charity, on the streets, or into public-houses, to while away the weary hours of compulsory idleness. The results may easily be anticipated. The wretched victims of this tyranny all got deeply into debt if they had any credit, and if they had none, sunk into such habits of idleness, profligacy, and intemperance, that great numbers of them have been permanently rendered mere nuisances and burdens to society. The cotton-spinners' strike alone instantly threw six or seven thousand women and children out of employment for a long period; eight thousand human beings were retained in a state of destitution and wretchedness for four months, merely at the pleasure of fifteen men.

Nor have the effects of this unhappy and unnatural system, upon society, been less disastrous. The cotton-spinners' strike cost the persons who were employed in that trade—spinners, piecers, and others—about £50,000! The loss to the masters was at least as great: that to the persons whom they employed or dealt with for provisions or other articles, probably still greater. £200,000 were lost to Glasgow and its vicinity in four months, without a shilling being gained by any human being, by the strike of this trade alone! The total loss sustained by Lanarkshire, between the strikes of

the colliers, the iron-moulders, sawyers, and spinners, last year, was at least £500,000."*

Some years ago, when Trades' Unions were powerful, the leaders entertained the hope that they would be able so to unite workmen of all kinds, as to make them entirely independent of every other class of the community. The tailors of the metropolis were selected to begin the experiment, and by this strike 13,000 of them at once lost their employment. The strike of the London tailors at that time was intended as the first of a series of strikes, which were to be followed by every trade throughout the country. This experiment failed, after it had done an immense deal of mischief, and brought distress upon thousands of families. "A few designing men had succeeded in imposing upon their fellow-workmen, and had persuaded them that they were the only useful orders; that, if true to themselves, they could support each other, and command their own terms from the middle classes, as the middle and higher classes could not exist without the labouring classes. The result of that strike is an answer to the fallacies which mercenary men, for their own purposes, instil into the minds of workmen. The places of the turn-out workmen were soon filled by strangers. The greatly-increased number of

* See *Working Man's Companion* for 1838, published by C. Knight.

labourers in the market, when the turn-outs could no longer exist without employment, opened a way for the introduction of an entirely new element of competition in the trade, and which has had more serious effects upon the condition of the workmen than any other change introduced. It was sudden, and the workmen had no time to accommodate themselves to altered circumstances. We allude to the temptations afforded to large capitalists, many of whom knew nothing about the trade, except as opening a new field for the investment of capital. By manufacturing on a large scale ; by making large purchases of materials for ready money—very often buying the stocks of bankrupts ; and by cutting down the wages of labour to the very lowest point ; they have been enabled to undersell the regular tradesmen, and drive many of them out of the market.”

Such was also the result of the great Preston strike in 1836, and such will be the result of all such combinations. Instead of adopting such ruinous plans, let working men, by argument, by truth, by fairness, set forth their grievances, and in the end they will obtain redress—slowly, it may be, but more certainly than though they extorted it by violence or intimidation.

FOURTH.

The evils of intemperance have been dwelt

upon in a previous chapter. Not one of the least of these evils is the extraordinary amount of money expended in the consumption of intoxicating drinks. A few facts on this subject will be sufficient to give us an idea of the enormous expenditure on these drinks. According to returns issued by the Excise, the following quantity of spirits were entered for home consumption in 1843 :—British spirits, 20,642,333 gallons; foreign spirits, 3,464,074 gallons; total, 24,106,407 gallons, which would cost the public at least £30,000,000. So much for spirits; now for malt liquor. It appears that the brewers in 1841 used 3,686,063 quarters of malt, which would produce 10,765,352 barrels of porter, stout, ale, and beer. Taking these at an average price, they would altogether cost the public not less a sum than £25,000,000. Of wines, it is calculated that about 7,000,000 gallons are consumed annually, costing the public about £10,000,000. Altogether, the sum spent in the United Kingdom on intoxicating liquors, of one kind or another, amounts to *sixty-five millions of pounds sterling annually*, or considerably more than the whole revenue of the country. In all probability, thirty out of the sixty-five millions are spent by the working, at all events, the struggling, classes.

This is, no doubt, principally owing to the

numerous and absurd drinking usages in existence among working men. "It appears," says Mr. Dunlop, "that there are a variety of occasions that occur weekly, monthly, yearly, or several times a year, among the working classes of this country, when, by the rules of each trade, considerable sums are extorted or levied, in a compulsory manner, for drink. It is probable, that in the metropolis alone, half a million sterling is annually exacted in this way. Each trade seems to have from half a dozen to twenty of these rules in continual operation."

We have here a very fearful picture of intemperance. The money spent, the time lost, the health deranged, the morals deteriorated, and the universal poverty and misery created, are not all the evils produced. We must also take into account the social benefits forfeited. "In short, without going farther into this monster evil, we may be well assured that *intemperance* alone, independently of every thing else, is a grand cause of general distress, and that if we could remove *that*, the condition of the working classes would rise under every difficulty, and they would enjoy a degree of comfort of which they have as yet had no experience."

It is, however, satisfactory to know, that during the fifteen years, from 1836 to 1849, the decrease in the consumption of rum and British

spirits has been nearly 6,500,000 gallons; in beer, 3,706,000 barrels; and in wine, 1,200,000 gallons, while a proportionate increase has taken place in the consumption of tea, coffee, and cocoa.

FIFTH.

I merely recur again to the subject of Life Assurances and Provident Institutions for the purpose of giving a Table of Premiums for the insurance of £100 at death. I may observe, that the amount of premium is nearly the same in all Assurance Companies.

**Table of Premiums required for the Assurance of £100 for
the whole term of any single Life, in Annual, Half Yearly, or
Quarterly Payments**

It appears that a working man of thirty years of age may secure the sum of one hundred pounds, payable to his family at his death, by the payment of ten shillings and two pence per quarter ; a sum comparatively so small, that by the exercise of a little self-denial, might be afforded by most artizans and skilled workmen, in the receipt of regular wages. Life assurance is by no means the mere luxury of the rich ; it is also attainable by the working man, and may be accomplished by the merest self-denial imaginable ; as for instance, two ounces of tobacco a week are equal to an expenditure of £1 10s. a year, or sufficient to insure a man's life, commencing at twenty, for £95. And surely the providing of such a sum is a sufficient inducement to practice such a small degree of self-denial as I have alluded to, if self-denial it may be called. Thus, without present injury to himself, the workman may do much towards elevating his moral, social, and intellectual condition, and so make life a blessing and old age an honour, while sickness and death are alike provided for !

FINIS.



